

NSC BRIEFING

1 May 1957

DEVELOPMENTS IN LAOS

- I. Pathet Lao during April stepped up military activity in two disputed provinces. Royal government forced to abandon at least three forward positions.**
- A. Rebels have 4,500 troops in Sam Neua (Gov't: 3,000); 1,800 in Phong Saly (Gov't: 1,500).**
- B. Rebels stiffened by reentry some Viet Minh cadres, weapons.**
- II. Royal Gov't engaging in limited counter-attacks.**
- A. Sending one battalion (750 men) to reinforce Sam Neua.**
- III. Rebel military activity probably has dual objective of improving bargaining position in current negotiations, while keeping Laos public aware of rebel "mailed fist".**
- [REDACTED]
- IV. Political developments likely to quicken with 11 May meeting of national assembly.**
- A. Premier Souvanna Phouma apparently planning to resign if Pathet problem not settled by then.**
- B. His departure could bring prolonged cabinet crisis: no other leaders appear to have sufficient support to form new Gov't.**
- V. Mid-April US-UK-French note, supporting reunification Laos but opposing "extraneous" concessions to rebels, reportedly well received in Vientiane and Pathet negotiators getting cooler treatment.**
- A. Indian, Polish member of ICC preparing resolutions denouncing this Western "interference."**